

## Chapter 2, History of the Serra Club of Kansas City in Kansas

In our first article we wrote about the founding of the KCK Serra club in 1970. In this, the second chapter, we will try to convey the continued growth and activity. Before continuing, we would like to acknowledge Bob Chenoweth's participation in the first article. Bob has been a member since 1971. Thanks Bob.



Those who contributed the history of several years after the founding are Maurice "Mo" O'Connor, John Jurcyk, George Gorman, and Msgr. Mullen. Dr. Jim Pretz was unable to contribute due to failing health. Dr. Pretz was very active in our club and added much to Serra USA as well. All of these Serrans have been active in our club's success in various ways. All of them were presidents at one time or another. A sincere thank you to each one for the assistance provided.

In the late 1970's, the membership had grown to about 70 members. According to John Jurcyk the model of Serra International was very similar to Rotary. The by-laws of the two groups were almost identical. In these early years members were employed rather than being retired. They represented many professions, another similarity to Rotary.

The club administration was different from today with fewer officers. As an example, George Gorman was secretary, which required meeting minutes, maintaining the roster, and producing the newsletter each month

Father Ray Davern and Msgr. Tom Tank were both respective rectors of the seminary and chaplains of our club in those years. Fr. Davern was later president of Donnelly College. Msgr. Koch, although not a chaplain, attended many of our meetings. He was a great supporter of religious vocations, and accompanied Msgr. Mullen to two Serra International conventions.

Another clergyman who had a great relationship with our members was Bishop Marion Forst. After serving in the Navy in WWII, he was bishop of the Dodge City, KS. Diocese for 16 years. He attended all four sessions of Vatican II, writing a journal about his experience. He served as Auxiliary Bishop of our Archdiocese for 10 years. During his service to the Archdiocese and in retirement he attended many of our meetings as our special guest. The members loved his friendliness, constant smile, and short dissertations. When he died at age 96 he was the oldest bishop in the U.S.

Activities were increasing and a new one was added in 1980-1981. The first Priest Seminarian golf and dinner outing was the idea of George LaHood, club president that year. Golf was at

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Sunflower Hills and the dinner was at Mike Sambol's farm. Twenty-eight attended. George Gorman, who was an officer at Sambol Meat Packing, became the master chef of the steak dinner. George continued as the steak dinner chef until recently. He and his wife, Virginia, prepared the side dishes for many years. After a few years, a relatively new Serran, Rick Wiseman, started assisting George. Rick is now filling George's shoes in what is now known as the Famous George Gorman dinner. The dinner was moved to a shelter in a park near Sunflower Hills, then to Meyn center in the park and now to St. Patrick's Parish Center.

More to come.